2:Sanders E-5 (no date) 1949 EE1 Bulgaria EE1
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APPENDIX IV

NEIGHBORHOODS AND NEIGHBORLY RELATIONS IN A BULGARIAN VILLAGE*

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During my first three years in Bulgaria, 1929-1932, I became generally acquainted with its rural life. When I returned to Bulgaria in 1934 for another three-year period I chose for special study one village, Dragalevtsy by name, whose 1,669 inhabitants live in houses clustered near the foot of Mount Vitosha four miles from the outskirts of Sofia. I visited the village on frequent occasions and lived there for weeks at a time. Although my investigations led me to consider many things such as the basic institutions, the formal and informal groupings, customs and folklore, along with the operation of the social processes, social control, and social change, one of the most difficult of the social phenomena for me, an outsider, to understand was the *mahala*, or neighborhood.

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THE MAHALA. Dragalevtsy, like the majority of European agricultural villages, is a compact settlement of farmers whose land lies around the village in strips, numbering approximately 16 per Dragalevtsy farmer. The village is at least four centuries old and has grown but slowly during that time. Until three or four generations ago all life was organized around the patriarchal *zadruga*,[1] or joint-family. The members of such a family owned everything in common and worked in harmony under the administrator or *domakin*, the acknowledged head of the *zadruga*. Although their dwellings were crude and overcrowded each *zadruga* needed a large plot of land around the houses for the flocks of sheep and other animals kept at home during the winter months. With the liberation of Bulgaria from Turkey in 1878 forces were let loose which hastened the break-up of the joint-family system.[2] Brothers moved away from the paternal home into dwellings of their own, these usually being

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[1] Ivan Evstatiev Geshov, *Zadrugite Vv Zapadna Bulgaria*, Per. Spisanie, God. V. Kn. xix i xx, str. 426, Stredets, 1886.

St. L. Kostov and E. Peteva, *Selski Bit i Izkustvo Vv Sofisko*, Sofia, 1935, str. 58.

[2] Some of the factors contributing to this break-up: (a) individualization following Bulgaria's liberation in 1878 and the spread of popular education; (b) fashion of small, individual families in the West; (c) disagreement between the wives of brothers living together under the same roof; (d) unwillingness of men working outside the *zadruga*, either as laborers or professional men, to hand over their whole earnings to the common treasury; (e) woman's newly-acquired right of inheritance.

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A NOTE ON METHODOLOGY AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

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1. CHOICE OF A VILLAGE: One of the first problems to be faced in this study was the choice of a village as a unit for investigation. Dragalevtsy was finally chosen on the basis of the following criteria:

a. It seemed representative of the villages of the *Shopski* region with respect to culture patterns and plane of living.

That the government authorities, notably the agricultural economists in the Ministry of Agriculture, considered Dragalevtsy representative along this line was shown by the fact that they selected it as one of the twenty-five villages throughout the country for a farm-income study. Another indication of its representative nature was the testimony of people who had moved into Dragalevtsy from other *Shopski* villages; they saw little difference between the culture patterns and plane of living to which they had been accustomed and those in Dragalevtsy. Officials consulted in connection with the choice of village were very quick to state that the *Shopski* region was one of the most conservative parts of the country, a point which has been borne in mind throughout the study.

b. Large enough to contain a significant number of formal groups and institutions.

Dragalevtsy was a medium-sized village, but did have all the institutions and most of the groups found in villages throughout the *Shopski* region.

c. Near enough to the American College to make possible frequent visits throughout the year.

Work at the College precluded the possibility of choosing a village on the other side of Mount Vitosha, even if that had seemed desirable. Because it fulfilled the first two requirements so well, Dragalevtsy was chosen in preference to two villages nearer the College and to others more readily accessible by automobile.

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2. BECOMING EN RAPPORT WITH VILLAGERS: After being assured of the co-operation of the mayor and other officials, I cultivated the acquaintance of the peasants for a five-month period before introducing any intimate questionnaire. During this period of "acquaintance," I attended a dinner for

000 of the Ottoman Empire in Europe were deeply rooted in Bulgaria, which was in closest proximity to its capital, the ancient Byzantium, noted for its geographical situation. Serbia and Greece were situated on the outskirts of this Empire. They were in touch with advanced European nations and were able to snap out of Turkish dominion because of the bigger centrifugal force along the periphery of the Empire. The loss of Bulgaria, on the contrary, meant for the Turks the beginning of the decline of Turkish authority in Europe.

We may then, without false modesty, express amazement at the relatively enormous achievements of Bulgaria under these circumstances. Bulgaria is a small country, lacking particular natural resources and yet, in her short free life of 67 years, she was able to reach accomplishments in the various aspects of her life, that could only be compared to achievements in countries much older than she. Let us sketch the above statements with a few data.

• 121 There is no claim to present in this book the vast information which might be necessary to acquaint an objective and willing reader with Bulgarian affairs. We would be pleased if we succeed in presenting a picture sufficiently characteristic of the main features of Bulgaria's past and present, and to cast a ray ot light on the facts that might be helpful to those on whom will depend the future of the Balkan Peninsula and its security from further catastrophies.

000 **3. Bulgaria is not Only the Country of Roses.** People who have a casual interest in small countries are usually satisfied with the fact that Bulgaria is the land of roses. It is true that there are roses in Bulgaria and that the Rose Valley is wonderful in May, and that the attar of roses produced there has been distributed all over the world since olden times to give sweetness and beauty to the life of elegance and splendor. But is Bulgaria only the land of roses and nothing else? No matter how poetic this description of our country appears to be, for the purposes of our study we will emphasize the point that Bulgaria is not the land of roses only. Bulgaria has not been filled only with the scent of delicate and fine roses. The bigger part of the thirteen centuries of her existence has been traced rather by the marks of their thorns than by the scent of their petals. It is hard to understand the Bulgarians, wifhout

8: Bojkoff K-4, 5 (no date) 1946 EE1 Bulgaria EE1

58. Conclusion. In spite of all that has been mentioned above in our study, we know 000 that there would be a lot of people who would not appreciate things as they find them. They would not recognize the share of the small and weak nations in the common cause for the advancement of the world. The far advanced Western European culture betrays the weakness of the strong, there is a hidden lookdown of the big on the small. We, the small, endeavor to keep up with the big, because present day life demands it from us. What Bulgaria represents to-day in material accomplishments, she owes it to her industrious and active population, rather than to any inheritance from forefathers and preceding generations.

We have limited ourselves so far to the preceding information. The reader will, however, find, other interesting facts in the graphic tables inserted in the text. We feel that we have offered an interested and willing reader, in a general and popular manner, the most important features that one would like to know about our country.

This book was written for those who would be willing /21 to know the objective truth about Bulgaria. Mutual respect and understanding are born from the objective study of things. We would have accomplished much, if the information offered our kind readers has helped them to respect our people and if we have added to the general interest in our roses an interest in the other qualities of our land and in the long suffering of the people, who look eagerly forward to a lasting period of peaceful and cultural development.

11: Logio S-4 (no date) 1936 EE1 Bulgaria EE1

PREFACE

Mr. Compton Mackenzie in his „First Athenian Memoirs" affirms, not without a certain dose of humour, that: „the Balkan country which really inspires the love of the Englishman is Bulgaria. There is something about Bulgaria which speaks to the very soul of the prosperous and intellectual English Nonconformist. . . there is something respectable about falling in love with Bulgaria".

Such sympathy is well deserved, for it is a public atonement for the crucifixion Bulgaria suffered at Berlin in 1878 through the unjustifiable and blundering intervention of the British government. Though the Bulgarian people's fondest hopes were then irrevocably shattered, its body politic maimed and crippled, no ill-will is harboured against the English. On the contrary, it is enough to intimate in Bulgaria that one is an American, or an Englishman in order that he be met with effusions of friendship, and overpowered with offers of assistance and attestations of goodwill.

For the Bulgarians recollect that it is mainly owing to the desinterested efforts of such warm-hearted Americans as Dr. Albert Long, Mr. Eugen Schuyler, Dr. George Washburn, and to that of the noble-hearted Englishmen, W. H. Gladstone, and Sir Edwin Pears, that their country owes its emancipation. It is the efforts of these men which brought to the knowledge of European public opinion the existence of Bulgaria and made the Bulgarian question the burning problem of the time. The liberation of Bulgaria, in some form or other, was already a settled matter, before the armed intervention of Tsarist Russia. Gladstone by his untiring efforts had well nigh convinced his more insularly minded colleagues that the best defence of the road to India lay „not in a dying despotism but in the breasts of free men" and it was only the success of the Russian arms which provoked the regrettable revulsion of feeling that led to the Congress of Berlin.

As a result of the world war Bulgaria has sustained further mutilations. She has been incapacitated and disabled, and turned into a mendicant among the

• 121 nations. Loans have been floated under the sponsorship of the League of Nations to succour her. The author canvassed at the time all his acquaintances and friends in favour of the loan which was raised on behalf of the Bulgarian refugees. The disillusion and loss this Refugee loan has caused to the author's acquaintances has been the chief moral incentive which has urged him to compile the present book. He feels he owes them a full explanation, and he, in a special chapter, has attempted to give a complete version of the story of these loans so that it may become clear that the responsibility for the partial default of their country does not weigh solely on the Bulgarians.

There are few peoples who have received such a severe bludgeoning from Fate as the Bulgarians. Religion unfortunately sits lightly on them and it is of little consolation to cite to their intent from the Epistle to the Hebrews: „If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom his father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons".

Sympathy and goodwill for Bulgaria, arising from a full knowledge of the difficulties with which she is faced, may help, however, her people to meet with greater fortitude the heavy task with which they are confronted. This has prompted the writer to enlarge on several little known aspects of Bulgarian life, and he sincerely believes that a perusal of this book, in spite of its manifold shortcomings, will not only enlighten the American and British public on Bulgarian affairs generally, but it will also help them to understand some of the causes which have led to the decline of Parliamentarism in most European countries.

It may also be added in conclusion that a study of the economic situation of Bulgaria will help readers to grasp the problems confronting most of the Danubian States, and will convince them how indispensable is the active participation of Gt. Britain in the economic life of these countries if the results of the present crisis are to be alleviated. Failing this policy, the only alternative remedy is a resurrection in some form or other of the *Mittel-Europa* scheme with all its momentous consequences.

G. C. L.